

1122



VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION
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March 17, 2009

Testimony in Favor of
S.B. 1122

From John R. Quinn
President/CEO

VNA Health Systems/Visiting Nurse Association of South Central Connecticut
One Long Wharf Drive
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Good morning Chairman Doyle, Chairman Walker and members of the Human Service Committee. My name is John Quinn, and I am President and CEO of VNA Health Systems which operates the Visiting Nurse Association of South Central Connecticut located in New Haven and CareSource, a private duty service based in Orange. We primarily serve patients and provide Home Care support in Greater New Haven County, the lower Naugatuck Valley and the Milford area. I appear before you today to support section 1-5 of Raised Senate Bill 1122, "An Act Concerning Changes to the Human Service Statutes". Our VNA Health Systems provide care to approximately 3500 patients annually.

I know full well the burden that is placed upon you as a member of the General Assembly I had the honor of serving four terms in the house from 1975-1983 from the 132nd District in Fairfield. My tenure included serving on the Human Service Committee and also as Assistant Majority Leader as part of the leadership bill screening process.

Our deficit then was not as grand a figure that you face but the basics of good legislation that is practical, effective and cost efficient still hold to the test of time.

Unlike many of the major corporations on a national level that received taxpayer bailout money, we are asking you only to ensure that Medicaid rates for home health care be brought closer to par with Medicare rates to ensure the viability of VNA's to continue to reach out and help all social segments of our society.

The new Administration is ready to cut Medicare rates due to questionable profits of some, mostly proprietary, home health agencies who will take Medicare but leave Medicaid patients out of the mix.



Serving Greater New Haven, Milford, the Shoreline and the Valley



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We don't do that at the VNA, any Medicare surplus is put back into our operations to subsidize Title 19 consumers.

If Medicaid rates are not brought up to par, and Medicare rates are decreased, then the VNA's and non profits just may not be there tomorrow to help keep health care costs lower by keeping patients in their homes and out of long term nursing home care.

Because we are "non profit" does not mean we can run our business any differently than a "for profit" on the fiscal side. Our mission and focus on quality care has given the VNA the stellar reputation we enjoy. But without fair and reasonable reimbursement rates under Medicaid, the business side will determine that the mission can not be met.

Let us work together to assure our indigent, our frail elderly, our mothers, our fathers will continue to have access to quality, mission driven home health care so they can lead a dignified independent life for as long as feasible.

Thank you for listening, and I encourage a joint favorable of raised Senate Bill 1122 from this Committee

Respectfully Submitted,

John R. Quinn
PRESIDENT/CEO

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